

Reporter

ST. CHARLES COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Important Information

NOTE – many of the following notices mention “sign-up” periods. The easiest way to not miss a sign-up period is to contact the appropriate agency at the USDA service center and ask to apply NOW.

FSA Reminders

- ◆ Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE) sign-up runs through June 1 for producers who suffered losses to their 2010 insured crops.
- ◆ 2012 DCP/ACRE sign-up runs through June 1
- ◆ Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) sign-up runs from March 6 through April 6
- ◆ Acreage Reporting Dates: Wheat – June 30; Corn, Soybeans, Grain Sorghum, Hay & Pasture – July 15.
- ◆ Producers wishing to receive notifications either by email or text message (texting charges may apply) of programs and deadlines may provide us with their email address or cell phone number and carrier. FSA is no longer able to send out reminder notifications by mail.

NRCS Program Sign-ups

- ◆ Seasonal High Tunnel Initiative – sign-up by March 30 for this cut-off period, or get information on the next period which will end June 1. Extend your growing season, manage plant and soil quality, and use fewer nutrients and pesticides.
- ◆ Organic Initiative – sign-up by March 30 for this period, or get signed up for the June 1 cut-off period. Participate in conservation practices on your organic production.
- ◆ On-Farm Energy Initiative – sign-up now for the March 30 cut-off period, or contact NRCS to be in the next ranking period with a cut-off date of June 1. Get an energy audit and learn how to conserve energy on your farm.

SWCD Cost-Share for FY 2013

For FY 2013, the SWCD received \$21,250 in cost-share allocation funds. Practices and allocations are as follows:

Grazing Management—\$3,600
Sensitive Areas—\$5,500
Sheet, Rill and Gully—\$9,000
Woodland Erosion—\$3,150

District staff are ready to begin targeting funds to specific projects. To learn more about conservation cost-share and to start planning for next year, give the district a call at 636-922-2833, ext. 3.

Thank You for your patience with the cost-share program. Money is now being allocated to districts multiple times during the year, providing various levels of funding at different times, so check back with throughout the year as more funds become available. Funds are requested through the Needs Assessment process, so let us know your plans for the next two years so we can request appropriate funds.



You and Extension –A Partnership Worth Exploring

Nearly 20,000 St. Charles County residents sought services in one form or another from St. Charles County Extension during 2011. The scope of services and opportunities within the Extension program is both extensive and impressive, considering the far-reaching and long-lasting effects they have on quality of life in the county.

That figure, 20,000, may actually be a little deflated. It is a challenge to calculate the exact numbers because so many of the programs lay roots that spark other projects, clubs, meetings, conversations and actions that trickle out through the community. Staff and volunteers reach too many people to accurately count with the information available for this article. (Note numbers in the sidebar below used to determine contact numbers for this article.)



The St. Charles County Extension office in St. Peters

application in the field.

Extension as we now know it, became a formal program offering services to ALL people in 1914 with the Smith-Lever Act, and St. Charles County held the first Extension meeting on Oct. 20, 1915 with the support of about 500 farmers and businessmen. The plan set forth from that day forward was to provide to all county residents access to the university system through a variety of programs, demonstrations, clubs, workshops, classes and more. Almost a hundred years later, county residents are still enjoying the benefits.

What Does Extension Do?

Extension Helps People! From its beginnings, helping farmers solve problems, to its present state, Extension reaches out to people helping them solve problems and plan for the future. Information is their product, and making information accessible is their mission. The ultimate goal is achieved when improvements are seen in over-all community health – healthy people, healthy

[See Extension, pg. 3](#)

St. Louis Regional Envirothon Held at Busch Conservation Area

The August A. Busch Memorial Conservation Area was the site of the 2012 St. Louis Regional Envirothon with 11 teams participating from five area high schools: Metro, Incarnate Word, and Parkway North (all of St. Louis County), Fort Zumwalt North of O’Fallon, and Eureka High School in Eureka.

The students competed in written, hands-on and oral tests in five resource areas: forestry, soils, wildlife, aquatics and a current issue. This year’s current issue theme was Low Impact Development and Non-point Source Pollution.

The top three teams, pictured below, will go on to compete in the Columbia area in the Missouri State Envirothon on April 18. The winning team at state competition will represent Missouri in the Canon International Envirothon which will be held this year in Pennsylvania—the state of the very first Envirothon 25 years ago.



St. Louis Regional Envirothon teams: (at left) First Place team from Parkway North High School in St. Louis County; (below left)—Second place team from Fort Zumwalt North High School in St. Charles County; and (below)—Third Place team from Parkway North. Congratulations!



Extension – What is it?

In its role most simply stated, Extension helps people access and use research-based knowledge to improve their lives. The seeds for the idea were sown shortly after the American Revolution when there developed a desire among farmers to share among themselves the knowledge and experiences that were bringing them either success or failure. Methods of problem solving on the farm were based on what farmers observed on their own farms and that of their neighbors. Reporting those observations to each other proved invaluable. A federal act in 1862 established land grant universities (to establish public universities), of which the University of Missouri was one, and in 1887, another federal act began the agricultural experiment stations, which combined research-based knowledge with practical

By the Numbers...

St. Charles Extension services in 2011

6 new businesses received start-up assistance
136 people received business counseling
116 participated in businesses training and conferences
32 older adults took part in the Stay Strong, Stay Healthy classes
565 youth participated in 4-H programs
25 arborists received professional certified arborist training
146 people took part in the Focus on Kids workshop which helps families navigate divorce
90 students learned about alternative energy
20 women attended financial seminars
31 people took the Seasonal and Simple class, learning about fruits and vegetables – and promoting local growers
81 people learned about food preservation and food safety
19 women attended the Women’s Financial Education series
70 people took the Retirement and Estate Planning course
38 participated in the Start Smart, Work Smart program,
35 volunteers learned programs/skills that they then teach at area colleges
150 attended the Master Gardener’s classes
180 adults volunteered as 4-H leaders
407 people completed Fire and Rescue training
117 farmers were trained in the use of pesticides
449 pesticide exams were taken for certification of commercial application
6,149 volunteer hours were logged by the Master Naturalists
5,755 volunteer Master Gardener hours were achieved
684 soils tests were performed
1,961 people walked into the office seeking services
14,408 people phoned the office with a variety of needs and questions

The Many Benefits of Grazing Systems

Charles Perkins, SWCD Technician, recently attended a workshop featuring two speakers noted for their knowledge of pasture lands and livestock. Perkins works with county farmers and landowners to help them find the most beneficial soil and water management techniques for their farms, and advises them on the benefits of such practices as Management Intensive Grazing.

"The workshop was informative and provided further validation for the natural resource practices offered by the Soil and Water District and NRCS," Perkins said. "Both speakers were very well-informed,"

Dr. Don Ball, Professor Emeritus, Department of Agronomy and Soils, Auburn University, spoke to producers on the subject of Stocker Cattle Performance and Pasture Costs. In a study he co-authored, the two pastures with the lowest pasture cost/pound of grain used tall fescue or orchardgrass and ladino clover.

Dr. Temple Grandin has designed livestock handling equipment for meat plants throughout the United States and Canada. This dynamic speaker, prolific author, and researcher spoke to the group about various livestock topics including facilities, and moving livestock in a grazing system.

Livestock can be trained to move when a gate is opened. The important part of the training is to give the animals a reward for moving to a new field. The reward can be fresh grass, grain or hay. Dr. Grandin advises, "keep the livestock handling experience positive."

"Livestock should not run to the next field, but walk calmly. When the path to the next field is steep, the animals will run because it is easier to run downhill. Assuming relatively flat ground at the bottom of the hill, the animals should return to a walk," according to Grandin.

"I have personally seen 300 calves move to the next paddock of a grazing system during a grazing school," Perkins said. "The animals calmly walked to the next field and began grazing."

If you wish to attend a grazing school, the following website includes grazing schools throughout the state: <http://agebb.missouri.edu/mfgc/index.htm> Click on "Grazing Schools". Grazing schools are required for eligibility in the DSP-3 state cost share grazing program.

Fescue and orchardgrass are common pasture grasses in the county. Adding legumes such as ladino clover or red clover to existing cool season grass pasture can be a relatively low-cost method of improving pastures. The economic impact can be great due to the legumes furnishing nitrogen to a companion grass. To find out more about legumes, go to <http://extension.missouri.edu/p/G4651> or stop by University of Missouri Extension, 260 Brown Rd., St. Peters, and request the fact sheet "Renovating Grass Sods with Legumes, G4651."

Managing forage with a grazing system fence allows livestock to uniformly remove plant growth and improve productivity from several aspects: plants are kept vegetative longer due to frequent grazing and rest periods, and livestock are not allowed to graze the entire farm selecting the youngest, most palatable plants. When given the opportunity, livestock will graze young tender plants to the point that the plants cannot survive due to a lack of reserves in the root system. For more information, stop by the NRCS office and ask for a copy of Missouri Electric Fencing for Serious Grazers.

Providing water in each paddock can improve water consumption by as much as 15 percent compared to livestock walking to a water source at a distant location, according to Missouri research. Adequate water supply is vital to healthy livestock. For more information, stop by the NRCS office and ask for a copy of Missouri Watering Systems for Serious Grazers.

Funding to construct Management Intensive Grazing Systems that include providing water to each paddock, subdividing pastures with fence, and establishing forages are available at your local USDA office, 160 St. Peters Centre Blvd., St. Peters. The Natural Resources Conservation Service and the Soil & Water Conservation District have programs that may help fund your project.

2012 County Poster Contest is Underway

The theme for this year's NACD Poster Contest is "Soil to Spoon" and is meant to get youth and adults alike thinking about where their food comes from. Whether it's a chicken nugget, ice cream, carrots or cereal, all your food can be traced back to healthy soil resources. Children are to use their own creativity and ideas to create a poster illustrating the theme.

Children living in St. Charles County and in 4th, 5th or 6th grade can participate in the local tier of the competition which is sponsored by the St. Charles County Soil and Water Conservation District. The contest opened February 15 and posters are due in the SWCD offices by April 13. Cash prizes will be awarded to the top three posters in each age group, and one grand prize poster will be submitted for the statewide contest in the fall.

Schools currently participating include All Saints Catholic School in St. Peters, Augusta Elementary in Augusta, Forest Park Elementary in O'Fallon, St. Charles Borromeo Catholic School in St. Charles, and Sts. Joachim and Anne Catholic School in Harvester.

There is still plenty of time to participate, and the **children can participate on their own outside the school setting** if they wish. If you know a child who would like to participate, contact Theresa at 636-922-2833, ext. 3., so your child can receive background information that will give him/her ideas to get started.



Farmers Can Help Protect Downstream Waters

Many of the cost-share practices implemented through NRCS and the SWCD are addressing a huge environmental problem—nutrients in our waterways. Lakes, estuaries and coastal waters are saturated with too much nutrition, feeding the growth of microbes and algae, and turning clear water cloudy. This deprives fish and other aquatic creatures of the oxygen they need to survive. While burning fossil fuels and urban sewage add to the problem, the biggest source is agricultural fertilizers.

School children today learn about the "dead zone" in the Gulf of Mexico—the area where the Mississippi River empties into the gulf. That once thriving fishing location is now devoid of aquatic life.

Farmers can help minimize the damage by participating in one of the conservation practices offered by NRCS or the SWCD. Applying appropriate fertilizers only when needed, using cover crops, and addressing erosion problems on the farm, greatly improve the outlook for downstream waters.

Call the NRCS and SWCD at 636-922-2833, ext. 3 to learn how you can help.

Mark These Dates



Grazing Schools Scheduled

Management Intensive Grazing Schools are offered throughout the state and are designed to give farmers and landowners up-to-date scientific and technological information about rotational grazing and grassland management. In addition, attending a grazing school is the **first step in qualifying** for the State Cost-Share practice, DSP-3, which helps the livestock manager set up a rotational grazing system, improve the forage possibilities and provide water for livestock in all paddocks.

Grazing Schools are typically two-day training events in which the landowners receive information on soil health, forage diversity, fencing systems, watering systems, and the economics of livestock management.

Regional Grazing School dates and locations are as follows:

April 4-5, 2012 — Montgomery City Library, 224 N. Allen St., Montgomery City, Mo. Contact the Montgomery County NRCS at 573-564-3715, ext. 3, for registration information. The \$65 fee covers the two-day school, the Missouri Grazing Manual, Pasture and Weed Guide, a grazing stick, Watering Systems & Electric Fencing Guide and lunch for both days.

May 8-9, 2012 — Mineral Area College, North College Center, 5270 Flat River Road, Park Hills, Mo. Contact Sue Denninger at 573-883-3566, ext. 3, for registration information. The \$90 fee includes two days of class, meals, refreshments and the following materials: Missouri Grazing Manual, Forages and Weeds of Pasture and one grazing stick.

September 12-13 — Union, Mo. Contact Lori Nowak at 636-583-2303, ext. 3, for more information. Course offerings and materials will be similar to those offered at the other schools.

Grazing Workshop for Small Ruminant Producers

Grazing specialists, veterinarians and researchers will gather at the George Washington Carver Farm in Jefferson City, to provide education and guidance in the grazing and management of small ruminant livestock. The three-day event will take place June 14-16, and is sponsored by Lincoln University and NRCS.

Topics will include forages, forage management, stockpiling, soils and fencing, and will be presented in both the classroom setting and in the field. Participants will learn the economic benefits of managing a grazing system for livestock, and will gain knowledge on designing paddock layout and developing a grazing system. Information about cost-share programs will also be offered.

For more information or to register, call Amy Bax at 573-681-6190.

Cost-share Practice Note

Landowners and contractors participating in a conservation practice need to contact NRCS or SWCD when **any changes** are made to plans after the original survey — especially when a pipe is involved. There have been some instances where the length of pipe (for example: a pipe on the back slope of a pond) has been increased without notifying the appropriate agency. The change needs to be approved and the new dimensions added to the plan. Sometimes an additional anti-seep collar can be added to address the difference.

Extension, from pg. 1 businesses, healthy economy. In both urban and rural settings, Extension focuses on:

- ◆ Youth Development – Through 4-H, youth learn life skills, build character, learn about careers, and participate in numerous activities, classes, enrichment programs, competitions and projects. Along with science and math knowledge, youth learn social and leadership skills, conflict resolution and community service.
- ◆ Agriculture – Access to research is still an important part of Extension services for the St. Charles County farmer. Demonstrations on local farms keep landowners up-to-date on improvements in the field, and foster a sharing of ideas among the neighboring farmers who gather for the demonstrations. Today, farmers also get assistance with learning how to produce alternative farm income, and improve their marketing and management skills. Also – farmers can make the best of the land they have by learning about crop and pest management, soil health, livestock care and much more. Improving the lives of farm families, and preserving farming as a strong part of the county economy is the underlying goal.
- ◆ Leadership – Countless professionals and volunteers are trained through Extension to offer services in the community. Natural resource workers, health workers, fire fighters, family services workers – all come to Extension workshops and classes to further their knowledge in their careers. These people then go back out into the community in their various professional and social roles and expand the reach of Extension – meeting the needs of people, plants and animals in all corners of the county.
- ◆ Natural Resources – Extension protects the environment. Landowners and homeowners learn about the wise use of natural resources and participate in workshops and programs that provide training in timber management, composting, recycling, lawn waste management and water quality. Native plants, proper fertilizer and pesticide applications, preserving wildlife and eradicating invasive non-native plants, making trails, planting gardens --- all of these are benefiting the community under the umbrella of Extension services.
- ◆ Families – Life can be full of hurdles, and when a person finds one hard to overcome...where do they turn?? Extension, hopefully! The county extension office can point people in the right direction whether it concerns health, nutrition, food preparation, child care, finances, health care, banking, divorce, exercise needs and stress management. Extension can lead the way to a better day.
- ◆ Community – Economic well-being is something we all desire. With recent hard times, many businesses and communities have struggled, and Extension has been there to help. Education is the base for personal improvement in the workforce; and small and medium business development, and improved job creation are among Extension goals.

Extension in St. Charles County

Extension’s County Program Director has a sometimes daunting, but always fulfilling job. Along with the support of a 15 member council, five university professionals and an office staff of four, Scott Killpack determines the best way to maintain a gateway in St. Charles

County to the system and resources of the University of Missouri. That gateway is kept open through the office located at 160 Brown Road in St. Peters, where much of the services are offered.

The task is daunting at times, because funding shortfalls in recent years have caused Extension leaders to develop ways to maintain the level of services offered to a growing, diverse community with access to fewer and fewer resources. The good news is that Extension is still strong in the county and thousands of people are reaping the rewards. Killpack and his small team of experts and university instructors continue to have confidence in being able to meet the public need at the local level. County Extension services are funded through a three-way partnership with federal, state and county government dollars. Unfortunately county revenue has taken the hardest hit with significant, yet necessary, cuts over the past few years. Despite



Extension Photo
Meeting the farmer where he works — It is a common practice for Extension staff to visit farms, conducting demonstrations on topics of interest. These St. Charles County farmers were attending a truck safety workshop.

tough budget decisions, County government remains a significant and appreciated supporter and partner of Extension, working closely in many programs such as those that involve the Master Naturalists (see below) and their work volunteering with the County Parks Department.

Your Extension office provides a multitude of local services including:

- Soil Testing – providing an opportunity to establish a healthy medium for growers big and small
- Plant Disease Diagnostics – finding the answer to those pesky bug questions
- Canner Gauge Testing – food safety and availability are important
- Distance Education Test Proctoring – making further education easier to attain
- Private Pesticide Applicator Training – ensuring pesticides are used safely and appropriately

Some Current Local Programs Include:

Taking Care of You – A program for the whole you – body, mind and spirit, addressing wellness, stress management and the mind/body connection.

4-H – An Extension mainstay, still going strong and reaching hundreds of youth each year. There are currently 22 clubs in the county.

Foreclosure Prevention – A topic for our times, this free program provides information on how to keep your home, and work with mortgage companies.

Financial and Legal Education – workshops for families in divorce, and a financial course for women in the workforce.

Get Checking – teaching people to set-up and maintain a checking account

Arborist Classes – training professional certified arborists

Gardening Classes – Numerous classes in such topics as native plants, vegetables in the garden, herb gardens, raised beds and lawn care.

Master Gardeners – Extension produces volunteers who maintain demo gardens, teach gardening classes, answer a horticulture hotline and speak at public events. These gardeners donated 1,410 pounds of fresh produce to a local food pantry during 2011, grown in the demo gardens at the Extension office in St. Peters.

Master Naturalists – These men and women survey plants and animals in the county, restore landscapes, provide nature programs, build trails, collect seeds, prune

trees, and – in 2011 – provided to county parks volunteer hours valuing almost \$16,000.

Many other programs on these and various other subjects are offered throughout the year, so log onto the website to find one for you (see contact info below).

Partners in Services

One of the visible strengths of Extension is the ability to locate and participate in other programs and institutions that have similar goals. By coordinating education and resources in the county, Extension is able to make the most out of what the county has to offer its citizens. Forming partnerships with other organizations makes good sense and has helped to build a strong, reliable Extension program – helping people access and use research-based knowledge to improve their lives. Partners include:

- County Government
- Soil & Water Conservation District
- Missouri Department of Conservation
- Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Farm Service Agency
- St. Charles County Parks
- St. Charles Community College
- University of Missouri St. Louis
- YWCA
- Shaw Nature Reserve

Getting Assistance From Extension

Call County Extension at: 636-970-3000

Log on to: <http://extension.missouri.edu/index.aspx> and link to your local county office website, browse fact sheets, read the latest research and find out about seminars, workshops, classes and volunteer opportunities.

Visit the office: 260 Brown Road, St. Peters, Mo.

How You Can Assist Extension

St. Charles County Extension Council is conducting a brick fundraising effort to keep programs and services at their current level. For each \$100 donation, a brick will be inscribed and used to build a pathway around the flagpole in the garden at the county extension office. Donations are tax-deductible. Call 636-970-3000 if you would like to participate or want more information.



Extension staff, council and friends greatly appreciate the supporters whose inscribed bricks have been added to the garden path.

Recycle Old Electronics

There are environmentally friendly options available to recycle, instead of throw away, old electronic products. A legitimate electronics recycler can remove potentially hazardous materials. Doing so will not only help prevent those materials from accidentally being exposed to the environment but also means the materials can be reused to make new products.

In St. Charles County, there are two locations that will take your old electronics:

- St. Charles County Recycle Works West at 2110 E. Pitman Avenue, Wentzville,
- St. Charles County Recycle Works Central at 60 Triad South Drive, St. Charles.

Both locations are open Monday through Saturday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., and are closed Sundays and holidays.

The sites are operated by the St. Charles County Division of Environmental Services.

Accepted electronics include: stereos, DVD and CD players, televisions, gaming systems and computers. They will even take old CDs and DVDs.

Missouri Forage and Grassland Council
Website has information on

Grazing Schools and other related events:
<http://agebb.missouri.edu/mfgc/index.htm>



Reporter

ST. CHARLES COUNTY

SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

160 St. Peters Centre Boulevard
St. Peters, MO 63376-1695

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Return Service
Requested

Register Now for Mission: Clean Stream 2012

On Saturday April 14, volunteers from St. Charles County and the communities of Cottleville, Dardenne Prairie, Lake St. Louis, O'Fallon, St. Charles and Wentzville will join with Greenway Network and Missouri River Relief to remove trash from local streams and lakes. Since inception, the event has taken on a whole new meaning, and name. Mission: Clean Stream started as a joint effort to pick up some litter from publicly accessible creek areas.

Today, Mission: Clean Stream has evolved into a challenge, or charge, for many hands to do some serious damage to the amount of trash in our waterways in a very short amount of time. Last year, roughly 1,000 volunteers pulled almost 10 tons of trash from Dardenne, Peruque, Belleau, Spencer and Cole Creeks in a little over two hours!

And even better, Greenway Network has gotten creative with the objects volunteers pull from the creeks. The Stream Trash ART (START) project, created by project director Ralph Rollins, salvages metal pulled from the streams and uses it to create new works of eco-art. Local artists will be working at **Quail Ridge Park** to create works of art from materials found. Look for local works to be on display in your community throughout February and March.



Families, organizations and individuals can participate by calling the nearest community to register (**See Box Below, center of page**).

The day will start at 8:30 a.m. with registration at one of the five rendezvous locations listed above. Everyone is asked to dress for the weather and wear sturdy shoes or boots and bring gloves... Trash is messy! Transportation is not provided. Breakfast or lunch will be served depending upon location. Register early—*space is limited*. Participants registering by April 1 will receive a free T-shirt. In case of dangerous weather or high water, the event will be rescheduled for April 28th.

This community-wide event is sponsored by the cities above, Greenway Network, Inc, Missouri Stream Team, Cee Kay Supply, Inc. and Wal-Mart. Financial donations to this worthwhile project are also appreciated for supplies and to defray the cost of tire disposal. Contributions can be made through Greenway Network at <http://greenwaynetwork.org>, greenwaynetwork@gmail.com or by calling (636) 498-0772. Register now and we'll see you at the creek!

**St. Charles County
Soil & Water Conservation District**
160 St. Peters Centre Boulevard
St. Peters, MO 63376-1695
636-922-2833, ext. 3

Board of Supervisors
Mark Scott, Chairman • Don Johnson, Vice-Chairman
Scott Killpack, Secretary • Paul Kamphoefner, Treasurer
Alan Poggemoeller, Board Member

District Personnel
Frankie Coleman, District Manager
Charlie Perkins, District Technician
Theresa Dunlap, Info-Ed Specialist

NRCS Personnel
Renee Cook, District Conservationist
Shawn Keller, Soil Conservationist
Curtis Hoeft, Soil Conservationist
Kervin Bryant, Soil Conservationist
Deb Frazier, ACES

Register with one of the following communities to participate in Clean Stream:

Dardenne Prairie [636-755-5308](tel:636-755-5308)
Meet at City Hall

Cottleville (636) 498-6565 x203
Meet at City Hall

Wentzville/Lake St. Louis (636) 332-9236
Meet at Quail Ridge Park

O'Fallon (636) 379-5408
Meet at Westhoff Park

St. Charles (636) 949-3237
Meet at Lewis & Clark Boathouse

Missouri River Relief 573-443-0292
Meet at Lewis & Clark Boathouse

Cora Island (636) 498-0772
Meet at Cora Island Parking Area

The mission of the Soil & Water Conservation District is to conserve the soil and water resources of the county; promote the wise use of these resources through education; protect residents from undue hardship caused by erosion, sedimentation and flooding; protect the agricultural soil base to ensure continued productivity; and preserve the quality of water and water courses within the county.